



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

March 8, 2021

OFFICE OF THE  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Dr. Joel Schwartz  
Executive Council  
International Society for Environmental Epidemiology  
North American Chapter  
1035 Sterling Road  
Herndon, Virginia 20170

Dear Dr. Schwartz:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding implementation of the *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018* (i.e., the *Evidence Act*) at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to which I am responding on behalf of the EPA's Acting Administrator, Jane Nishida. The agency is committed to the robust implementation of the *Evidence Act*, which is designed to improve the use of evidence and data to inform federal government policies and programs.

The *Evidence Act* specifically directs federal agencies to expand the open and secure access to federal data. Title II (the *Open Government Data Act*) describes open data as "a public data asset [that is in] a machine-readable format that is accessible and useful to the public." Significantly, the *Evidence Act* does not remove protections provided by any other laws governing the confidentiality of data collected by the government. Agencies are expected to assess carefully data for risks and restrictions related to the disclosure of personally identifiable information and ensure the requisite standards of privacy and confidentiality are met. The EPA is committed to meeting these standards. Information about specific agency actions to enhance public access to the agency's federal data assets, with adherence to security and privacy protections, can be found at our [Open Data webpage](#).

The *Evidence Act* also directs federal agencies to enhance the ability of governmental and non-governmental researchers to use federal data to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and to suggest program improvements. The [Presidential Memorandum on Restoring Trust in Government Through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking](#) signed on January 27, 2021, affirms federal commitment to these activities. Consistent with the law and the Presidential Memorandum, the EPA's three *Evidence Act* officials are working closely with the agency's Scientific Integrity Official to incorporate scientific-integrity principles into our data governance, evaluation and other evidence-building approaches.

If you have additional questions about implementation of the Evidence Act at the EPA, I encourage you to contact our Acting Evaluation Officer, Katherine Dawes, who may be reached directly at [dawes.katherine@epa.gov](mailto:dawes.katherine@epa.gov) or (202) 566-2189.

Sincerely,

DAVID  
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David A. Bloom  
Acting Chief Financial Officer

cc: Katherine Dawes, EPA Evaluation Officer (Acting), Office of the Chief Financial Officer  
Dr. Richard Allen, Chief Data Officer, Office of Mission Support  
Dr. Alex Marten, Statistical Official, Office of the Administrator  
Dr. Francesca Grifo, Scientific Integrity Official, Office of Research and Development